

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 452 388

CE 081 656

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TITLE Narrowing Opportunities for Adults in Ontario Secondary Schools: A Study of Students Affected by the Changes to Provincial Funding of Adults and the Education Act, 1996. NALL Working Paper #09.
INSTITUTION Ontario Inst. for Studies in Education, Toronto.
SPONS AGENCY Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Ottawa (Ontario).
PUB DATE 1999-00-00
NOTE 20p.
AVAILABLE FROM NALL: New Approaches to Lifelong Learning, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6. Tel: 416-923-6641; Fax: 416-926-4725 (\$3). For full text: <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/depts/sese/csew/nall/res/09narrowing.htm>.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; At Risk Persons; Compliance (Legal); Delivery Systems; Developed Nations; Disabilities; *Educational Opportunities; Educational Policy; Educational Research; *Educationally Disadvantaged; English (Second Language); Females; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; Government School Relationship; *High School Equivalency Programs; Minority Groups; *Program Termination; *Secondary Education; State Surveys; Student Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS *Ontario

ABSTRACT

A study investigated effects of implementation of a new policy by the Ontario Ministry of Education that decreased grants for adults and amended the Ontario Education Act, forcing school boards to develop a parallel but "basic service" system of education for everyone over age 21. All adult students in daytime secondary school programs were asked to supply basic demographics; human rights information such as whether students had a disability or belonged to a visible minority; whether they had special education needs; and information pertaining to student knowledge of pending changes in the grant system and their possible effects. Submissions were received from 117 schools, representing 7,723 completed questionnaires. The next phase of the research examined the changes that had occurred in five Target Boards (TBs) in the year following implementation of the adult funding model. Findings indicated that TBs responded to the changes in government policy by redesigning their adult programs using a continuing education model and creating policies directing adults to the new system. This resulted in a narrowing of educational opportunities for adults. Women, visible minorities, people with disabilities, and people who registered in English as second language courses were disproportionately represented among those adults who attended secondary school programs before and after the changes in government policy. (Instruments are appended.) (YLB)

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**Narrowing Opportunities for Adults in Ontario Secondary Schools:
A Study of Students Affected by the Changes to Provincial Funding of Adults and the Education
Act 1996**

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INTRODUCTION

As a result of the Ontario Ministry of Education implementing a new policy, which decreased the grants for adults, and amended the Ontario Education Act, school boards have been forced to develop a parallel but "basic-service" system of education, and to direct everyone over the age of 21 into this new system. In contrast, is the Ministry policy of the previous ten years which encouraged adults to return to school to earn their Ontario Secondary School Diplomas (OSSD's) and resulted in school boards building programs to meet the needs of adults using the Ministry funding which was, until the 1996-1997 school year, equal to that of adolescent students.

A survey of five school boards, which had until this school year offered full adult education programs, shows that the net result of the changes has been a seriously eroded system of education for adults characterized by an overall reduction in educational opportunities and an increase in the variability of programs from Board to Board, meaning that opportunities to earn an OSSD are not equitable.

The population most negatively affected by these changes is that group of adults who do not have an OSSD and are economically disadvantaged; additionally, within this population exists groups of students who are even more disadvantaged. These groups: people with disabilities, visible minorities, women, and students who are taking English as a Second Language (ESL), continue to be disproportionately represented in the population of adults who are enrolled in the publicly-funded secondary school system. The new system of adult education increases the burden on these disadvantaged groups making it even more unlikely that they will be able to benefit from the philosophy of life-long learning espoused by the current government of Ontario, and particularly the Ministry of Education. Even in the first year of the new system, the effects of the changes in grants were seen in the dramatic decrease in the number of adults enrolled in secondary school programs.

Background

In November of 1995, the Minister of Education, John Snobelen, announced that beginning in September 1996 school boards would receive only Continuing Education grants for students 21 years of age or older

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regardless of the type of school, class, or program that an adult attended. As an example, in 1996 an adult student attending full time at his/her neighbourhood secondary school would generate \$2.33 per hour in grant money for the Board while an adolescent student taking exactly the same classes would generate \$7.45 in grant per hour. It was obvious at that point that programs would have to change as the Boards which had been offering day school funded programs for adults would no longer be able to afford to pay contract teachers and to offer the range of support services which are available in traditional secondary school programs.

In June 1996, Bill 34 was passed to amend the Education Act to read: "a board may direct a person ... who is enrolled in or seeks to be admitted to a secondary school ... to enrol in a continuing education course". This "applies to ... a person in respect of whom funding ... is calculated ... on the same basis as funding in respect of a person in a continuing education course or class." Since students 21 years of age receive Continuing Education funds, it is this group of students, 13% of the total secondary population in 1995, whom Boards may direct to Continuing Education courses. In other words, adult students no longer must be accommodated in day school programs whether that is an "adolescent" school or an adult school. The Education Act does guarantee, as it always has, that seven years of tuition free secondary school are available to anyone but now, regardless of whether an adult is enrolled in day school or Continuing Education, Boards will receive only Continuing Education funding.

METHODOLOGY

The research which is reported here is one part of a larger project which had its genesis at the 1996 Annual Meeting of OSSTF, where the Adult Education Action Plan House Committee passed a motion directing the Provincial Executive to:

coordinate the collection of statistical data including but not limited to information about students twenty-one years of age and over in Ontario and the programs they may be denied in order to support legal action which may be taken in the future to protect these students from discrimination

In response to that directive, the Provincial Executive of the OSSTF initiated a study in which all adult students in day-time secondary school programs in the province were asked four types of information: 1) basic demographics such as age, gender, reason for being in school, and source of financial support; 2) human rights information such as whether the student had a disability or belonged to a visible minority; 3) special education needs such as whether the student had experienced learning difficulties as a child, or whether the student had sought the help of a special education teacher; and 4) information pertaining to the student's knowledge of the pending changes in the grant system and the effect the changes might have on educational opportunities for adults. The Year 1 Pre-Grant Year questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A.

Year 1: Pre-Grant Year

In May 1996, the OSSTF Branch President of each secondary school in the province was asked to administer a questionnaire to students over the age of 21. In adult schools, all students, including those under 21, completed the questionnaire. The results were compiled on tally sheets and returned to the OSSTF provincial office for analysis.

School Level Response

Submissions were received from 117 schools, representing 7723 completed questionnaires. To analyze these submissions, the total number of responses to each question was converted to a percentage of the

total responses to each question. These results are given in Appendix B. It should be recalled that these results were received in the form of total number of responses to each question by school and not by individual.

Individual Level Response

Although not specifically requested to do so, a large number of schools returned the original questionnaires completed by the students. Because of the greater flexibility which this offered in analyzing the pattern of responses between groups, the individual questionnaires of 4727 students from 78 schools were compiled. When the responses of the under 21 year-olds were removed, this left a pool of 4198 responses. These responses which can be seen in Table 1 form the basis upon which the findings from the Year 1 Pre-Grant phase of the study are reported.

Year 2: Post-Grant Year

The Year 2 portion of the study was supported by funds from the Network For Approaches to Lifelong Learning (NALL) and from the Action Research committee of the Ontario Secondary Teachers' Federation.

**TABLE 1: Percentage Positive Response of 4198 Adult Students
to Selected Questions in the Pre-Grant Year**

QUESTION	PERCENT RESPONSE (ROUNDED)
Gender	
male	37%
female	64%
Why In School	
better job	37%
self improvement	20%
college/university	38%
other	06%
Source of income	
job	17%
government assistance	41%
family	20%
savings	4%
employment insurance	10%
other	9%
ESL Student	
yes	40%
Disability	
Yes (to at least 1 category)	16%
Visible Minority	
yes	38%

Early Learning Problems yes	17%
Asked Sp.Ed. Help yes	12%

This phase of the research examined the changes which had occurred in five Target Boards in the year following the implementation of the adult funding model. The five Boards were selected from within Southern Ontario to represent a diversity of size, (large versus small), location (urban versus rural), and grant status (i.e., negative versus positive). Furthermore, all the Boards had active adult programs prior to the change in grants, all Boards had responded to the Year 1 questionnaire in sufficient numbers to make comparisons meaningful, and all Boards were willing to participate in the Year 2 phase of the research. Based on these criteria, the Boards of London, Grey County, Niagara South, Brant County and the City of York were asked to participate. The Year 2 phase consisted of two components. First, all students over the age of 21 in the adult programs of each Board were asked to complete the questionnaire. As can be seen in Appendix C, the questions pertaining to basic demographics, human rights, and special education were identical to those in the Year 1 phase. The questions in the fourth section, Your Plans For Next Year changed each year. In Year 1 the questions examined whether the students were aware that the new funding formula could negatively affect their study programs. In Year 2 the students were asked about their educational right to access courses in adolescent schools, and about their awareness of alternative educational facilities and educational training. The question that remained constant in each year was: "Do you know that school boards receive much less funding for adult students than for adolescent students?" A total of 1342 questionnaires were returned from the Target Boards. Table 2 gives the number of completed questionnaires for each of the five Target Boards in Year 1 Pre-Grant Year and Year 2 Post-Grant Year.

Chi-square tests of independence were conducted on this data to determine if differences in the pattern of the responses reached a level of statistical significance.

The second component of the Year 2 phase of the study examined the response of the Target Boards to the changes in the grants. This was done through interviews with administrators and by reviewing Board reports to the Ministry.

TABLE 2: The Number of Completed Questionnaires in the Target Boards in the Pre-Grant and the Post-Grant Years

BOARD	YEAR 1 PRE-GRANT YEAR (# respondents)	YEAR 2 POST-GRANT YEAR (# respondents)
BRANT COUNTY	33	0
CITY OF LONDON	699	371
CITY OF YORK	511	610
GREY COUNTY	38	62
NIAGARA SOUTH	106	199
TOTAL	1387	1242

RESULTS

FINDING I: THE TARGET BOARDS RESPONDED TO THE CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT POLICY BY REDESIGNING THEIR ADULT PROGRAMS USING A CONTINUING EDUCATION MODEL AND BY CREATING POLICIES DIRECTING ADULTS TO THE NEW SYSTEM. THIS RESULTED IN A NARROWING OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS.

Section I examines the response of the five Target Boards to the changes in government policy. As could be predicted, the response of the five target Boards varied according to their grant position. The four Boards who were in a positive grant position (i.e., their programs depended on Ministry grants), took immediate steps to bring their adult programs into line with the reduced government grants. For the London, Grey County, and the Niagara South Boards this meant two things: first, they re-designed their adult programs, changing them from a day-school, full-service model to a continuing-education, basic-service model and, second, they developed internal policies directing adults out of the day-school programs and into the new continuing-education programs. The response of the Brant County Board of Education was even more drastic. They closed their existing adult program and denied access to the day-school for anyone over the age of 21. Because of their negative grant position, the City of York continues to operate a full-service, day-school program where adults and adolescents receive comparable services.

With the exception of the City of York Board, the overall effect of these changes has been a dramatic narrowing of educational opportunities for adults wishing to earn a secondary school diploma. This, in turn, has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of adults seeking to enrol in the secondary school system in the 1996-97 school year.

1. DEVELOPMENT OF CONTINUING -EDUCATION MODEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY FOR ADULTS

Prior to the changes in the grant structure, and in response to historical government encouragement, the Boards of Education in the five Target Boards had well developed programs and facilities specifically geared to adults. In addition to these adult-only facilities, adults were enrolled in a variety of regular secondary school programs. Thus, in each of these Boards, adults could be found in adult-only facilities, in adult-only classes within regular secondary schools, and in classes shared with adolescents. This flexibility within the existing structure offered a wide range of opportunity for adults wishing to earn a secondary graduation diploma. When the changes to the grant structure were announced, the Boards responded in different ways. As has been noted already, Brant County closed its adult facility and re-directed adults to night school programs. In contrast, the Boards in Grey, Niagara South, and London, chose to maintain adult programs to the extent to which they are cost-effective. Cost-effectiveness could best be achieved by shifting to a continuing-education model of service delivery. This has resulted in a variety of changes to the way in which services are delivered.

A. Change in Physical Plant.

Grey County closed the three rented sites in which they offered programs and moved the adults into existing spaces in two secondary schools and into the Board Office. Niagara South maintained the major programs in Welland and Niagara Falls, and closed the three smaller programs running in secondary schools. London maintained its existing site but changed it from an adult-only facility by twinning it with an adolescent school whose site was being renovated. More recently, the adult programs have been moved so that they are spread between three buildings in order to accommodate another adolescent school currently being renovated.

B. Reduction in Administrative and Ancillary Support Staff

Each of the Boards reduced the administrative staff. The programs in Grey County now operate without the support of any administrators; nor is there any support staff in the form of guidance counsellors or librarians. The secretarial support was reduced to one person.

A similar picture emerges in Niagara South where the counselling and assessment services were reduced to one person and that role will disappear in the 97-98 school year. The librarian was replaced with a library technician. The vice-principal position was removed.

In London, there were also dramatic reductions. Previously, the school operated with one principal (maintained), three vice-principals (reduced to one), six program co-ordinators (reduced to 3), and two department heads (positions removed). The Student Services department consisting of 12 people, was reduced to 2 people. There were similar reductions in the secretarial services and in the library staff.

C. Hourly-Paid Teachers

In Grey County and in Niagara all the Form 1 teachers (i.e., teachers from the regular system paid on the salary Grid) were replaced with Form 3 teachers (i.e., non contract teachers paid on an hourly basis and hired by the course). While London uses a combination of Form 1 and Form 3 teachers (6 Form 1 and approximately 45 Form 3), the Form 1 teachers may be phased out after the 1997-98 school year. In each of the three Boards the Form 3 teachers are paid approximately \$30 per hour, and there is no monetary provision for preparation time, for individual student-contact time, or for professional development time.

D. Change in Programs

In the continuing-education model it is generally accepted that no course can be offered if there is not sufficient registration to make it cost effective. In developing a program, each Board moved to a modular approach in which classes run anywhere from 2.5 to 3.5 hours per day. This, in turn, allows for 5 or 6 modules within the traditional school year. Other than the modular approach, however, there is little similarity among the programs offered in the three Boards of London, Niagara South and Grey. A student in Grey County, for example, who was hoping to register in a course in the term beginning in February, 1997 would have a choice of 3 courses in Markdale, 5 courses in Owen Sound, or 2 courses in Hanover. The only math course was in accounting or consumer math and the only English was a Grade 11 Media. The remaining courses were in computers, law, or co-operative education.

A student in Welland in Niagara South would have the choice of a wider range of courses but only two (English, Grade 11 and Grade 12) were in the traditional academic stream. The remaining courses were in computers (Internet, desktop publishing, repair, call centre, accounting), cosmetology, and technical (food service, auto mechanics, cabinet making, horticulture, restoration, set design, small engines).

An adult approaching the London Board in February, 1997 had the choice of a wide range of subjects at both the general and advanced levels and at all grade levels. In comparison to what was available in the school two years previously, there was a narrower range of choices with no courses being offered in technical programs or in music, physical education or art. There would also be much less flexibility for the prospective student in that the number of sections of courses offered in February 1997 was 66 in comparison to 223 in February, 1994.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ENROLMENT POLICIES.

It is important to note that, prior to September 1996, there was no distinction made on the basis of age

for enrolment in secondary schools. Regardless of age, everyone who met the residency requirements and had passed Grade 8 had the right to attend their local secondary school. That disappeared when the Education Act was changed in the spring of 1996. Section 49.2 (1) of the Education Act allows Boards to "direct" adults out of the regular day-school system and into the continuing education system. Using this provision, the Boards of Brant, London, Grey, and Niagara have developed policies in which they will no longer accept adult students in regular secondary schools except under very exceptional circumstances. (In the 1996-97 school year these Boards made temporary exceptions to their new policy to allow a few adult students who were already enrolled in secondary schools to complete their programs.)

Section 49.2 (4) of the Education Act includes a provision whereby some adults may register for specific courses in a secondary school. If a course which is required for admittance to a trade or a profession, or is required for enrolment in a university or college, is not available through continuing education, then the adult may take that course at a regular secondary school. The London Board has effectively circumvented this provision by developing a policy which interprets Section 49.2 (4) as meaning the minimum requirement needed to enrol in a trade, or in a college or university. Thus, if a student who needed a biology course to enrol in a university science program, already had enough credits for entrance to a general arts program, then the application to take biology in a regular secondary school would be denied. This practice is sanctioned by the Regional Ministry Office. A policy based on the London model is planned by Niagara South for the 1997-98 school year.

Finally, Section 49.2 (7) of the Education Act contains a provision whereby adult students with disabilities may be placed in a day-school program. None of the target Boards have developed any procedure by which this may happen. Nor do the Boards have any method of informing students of this provision within the Education Act.

These changes have resulted in a dramatic loss of educational opportunities for adult students. Whereas in the past, adults had the right to access the full range of programs offered by their school board, now they are limited to the type of program which the Board is willing to provide. The fact that adults are increasingly less aware of their educational rights exacerbates the problem. In the first year of the study, for example, 92% of the students said that they were aware that Boards of Education received much less funding for adult students than for adolescent students. A year later that percentage had dropped to 66%. As a further indication of the increasing lack of awareness of their rights, 54% of the students in the second year said that they were not aware that they could take some courses in adolescent schools.

The lack of alternative educational opportunities increases the vulnerability of these students. Only 40% of the students said that they were aware of learning opportunities other than in their present school. Furthermore, these opportunities which the students did list most frequently were private colleges and training facilities, or post-secondary institutions, both of which demand large tuition fees.

A less obvious, but no less serious effect of the move to continuing-education models of service delivery for adults, is that adults have lost their legal right to an education at the secondary level. Continuing Education programs are not mandatory programs within the Education Act. It is the choice of the individual Board as to whether or not they run a continuing education program. Adults in Brant County had no legal recourse when the Board of Education decided to discontinue all day-time programs for adults. Even when Boards do run continuing-education programs, the adults who enrol in those programs have no right to request specific courses, or to expect special education accommodation. As will be noted in the next section, the groups of people who enrol in secondary programs are the very groups most in need of specialized courses and support services.

FINDING II: WOMEN, VISIBLE MINORITIES, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND

PEOPLE WHO REGISTERED IN ESL COURSES WERE DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED AMONG THOSE ADULTS WHO ATTENDED SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS, BEFORE, AND AFTER, THE CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT POLICY.

This research showed that the adults who were registered in secondary programs prior to the changes in grants were a diverse group who, nonetheless, exhibited some characteristics in common. The majority of these individuals, for example, saw education as a route to a better job and an improved position in society. At the same time, they were members of distinctive subgroups: women, visible minorities, people with disabilities, and people who were taking ESL courses. The proportionate size of these subgroups within the adult student population was larger than would be expected from the general population, and second, these subgroups demonstrated unique patterns of responses.

While the changes in the grants did lead to significant differences in the number of adults attending secondary schools, the changes did not result in differences in the relative composition of the adult students. There were two exceptions to these generalizations: in the post-grant year, there was a significant decrease in the relative number of ESL students taking courses, and second, there was a significant change in the pattern of how the students were supporting themselves. It is not clear whether these changes were directly related to the change in the grant system, or whether they were part of other factors affecting the society as a whole.

CHARTER GROUPS

It is evident that many of the adults who enrol in secondary school courses belong to minority groups which, historically, have encountered various forms of discrimination in the society. The vulnerability of these groups has been recognized in Section 15 (1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which designates specific groups as needing protection from discrimination.

1. CHARTER GROUPS IN THE PRE-GRANT YEAR

A. Women

Women represented about 63% of the adults who were registered in secondary schools in 1995-96. In comparison, Statistics Canada reports that in 1991, 50.8% of the total Ontario population were female.

Women showed several significant differences in their responses to the questionnaire when compared to the responses of men.

- men were more likely to want to go to college or university while proportionately more women were in school for self-improvement or to get a better job.
- women were more likely to depend on their family for financial support, while men were more likely to support themselves through jobs, government assistance, and employment insurance.
- men were more likely to have experienced learning problems as children and to have sought the help of a special education teacher.
- men were more likely to have some form of disability.

B. Visible Minorities

While 13% of the population of Ontario are visible minorities, 36% of the respondents in this study said they were members of a visible minority. To further clarify this comparison, some of the Census Metropolitan Areas reported in the Statistics Canada Fact Sheets on the Employment Equity Designated Groups, 1991 are compared to the results for that area from this survey. While the geographical areas do

not correspond exactly, the results confirm the impression that a disproportionate number of adults from visible minorities were enrolled in secondary school programs throughout the province. For five areas, the percentage response on the Adult Education Survey is listed first, and then the comparison results from Statistics Canada is given in brackets: Waterloo County, 25% (Kitchener, 8.4%), London, 26% (London, 6.8%), Welland, 18% (St. Catharines-Niagara, 3.3%), Toronto, 45% (Toronto, 25.8%).

The responses on the questionnaire showed that visible minorities were more likely than non-visible minorities:

- to want to go to college or university
- to indicate government assistance as source of income and less likely to indicate employment insurance
- to have taken ESL in the last three years
- to have a disability

C. Persons with Disabilities

According to Statistics Canada, 7.4% of the Ontario population in the age range of 15 to 64 are disabled and 7.1% of the workforce are disabled. In comparison 16% of the adult students said that they had at least one of: a physical disability, a learning disability, or some other disability.

In comparison with persons with no disabilities, person with at least one disability were:

- less likely to be in school to get a better job and more likely to be in school for self-improvement or to go to college or university
- more likely to have sought help from a special education teacher
- more likely to be supported by government assistance and less likely to have jobs, to have support from employment insurance, or to have help from their families
- more likely to have experienced learning problems as a child.

D. ESL Students

Approximately 43% of the students in adult secondary programs need to learn English. These people are probably new arrivals in Canada for whom the foundation of language skills is a necessity for building a future for themselves and their children.

Respondents who had taken an ESL course in the last three years were more likely than students who had not taken an ESL course:

- to want to go to college or university
- to indicate government assistance and family as their source of income.

Students who had taken an ESL course were less likely than students who had not taken an ESL course:

- to have a disability
- to have had problems in school as children or teenagers
- to indicate employment insurance as their source of income

2. CHARTER GROUPS IN THE POST-GRANT YEAR

To compare whether the characteristics of the students changed in Year 2, the questionnaires in the target

Boards (i.e., City of York, London, Grey County, and Niagara South) for Year 1 were compared with the results in Year 2. The results from Brant County, which had closed its adult programs in Year 2, were not used in this comparison. The chi-squares (see Table) failed to show any significant differences in the categories of: gender, disability, visible minority, childhood learning difficulties, or reason for being in school.

**TABLE 3 :PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES TO
SELECTED QUESTIONS: TARGET BOARDS (EXCLUDING
BRANT COUNTY)
PRE-GRANT YEAR VS. POST-GRANT YEAR**

Category	Pre-Grant % (rounded)	Post-Grant % (rounded)	Chi-Square
Gender	59%	61%	
Female			
Why In School			
Get a better job			
Self Improvement	36%	34%	
Go to college/university	20%	22%	
	37%	38%	
	07%	06%	
Other			
Major Source of Income			p< .01
Job			
Government Assistance	16%	18%	
Family	45%	46%	
	17%	17%	
Savings	03%	04%	
Employment Insurance	10%	05%	
	10%	11%	
Other			p< .001
ESL Student			
Yes	43%	37%	
Disability			
Yes	21%	20%	
Visible Minority			
Yes	29%	30%	

Early Learning Problems	15%	17%
Yes		

There were differences, however, in how the adults were supporting themselves, and whether they had taken an ESL course in the past three years. In the post-grant year there was a significant reduction in the proportion of students who were receiving employment insurance (i.e., a drop from 10% to 5%). This was off-set by a smaller increase in those who said they were getting their money from a job (i.e., 18% as opposed to 16%), from government assistance (46% versus 44%), and from family (17% versus 16%). The proportion of adults who said they had taken an ESL course also dropped significantly in the post-grant year, from 43% to 37%.

**TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES TO ELECTED QUESTIONS: BOARDS IN POSITIVE GRANT SITUATION (GREY, LONDON, NIAGARA SOUTH)
PRE-GRANT YEAR VS. POST-GRANT YEAR**

Category	Pre-Grant % (rounded)	Post-Grant % (rounded)	Chi-Square
Gender			
Female	56%	59%	
Why In School			
Get a better job			
Self Improvement	29%	28%	
Go to college/university	22%	26%	
Other	43%	41%	
Major Source of Income			
Job			
Government Assistance	15%	18%	
Family	40%	44%	
Savings	14%	12%	
Employment Insurance	03%	04%	
Other	13%	07%	
ESL Student			
Yes	14%	16%	
	31%	21%	p< .01
			p< .001

Disability		
Yes	26%	30%
Visible Minority		
Yes	24%	20%
Early Learning Problems		
Yes	20%	24%

Because the programs in the City of York were not affected by the changes in the adult-grant system, in the next set of analyses, the Boards were separated into two groups based on their grant situation and the chi-squares were re-run. For the Boards in a positive-grant situation (i.e., Grey, Niagara South, London) the chi-squares, as seen in Table 4, continued to show a significant reduction in the proportion of ESL students, and a significant change in the pattern of where students were getting their support money.

**TABLE 5 :PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES TO
SELECTED QUESTIONS: BOARD IN NEGATIVE GRANT SITUATION (CITY OF YORK)
PRE-GRANT YEAR VS. POST-GRANT YEAR**

Category	Pre-Grant % (rounded)	Post-Grant % (rounded)	Chi-Square
Gender			
Female	64%	64%	
Why In School			
Get a better job			
Self Improvement	50%	40%	
Go to college/university	17%	19%	
	28%	35%	p< .05
Other	06%	06%	
Major Source of Income			
Job			
Government Assistance	17%	17%	
Family	52%	48%	
Savings	21%	23%	
Employment	03%	04%	
Insurance	04%	03%	
Other	03%	05%	
ESL Student			

Yes	62%	55%	p< .05
Disability			
Yes	12%	10%	
Visible Minority			
Yes	38%	40%	
Early Learning Problems			
Yes	07%	10%	

For the City of York Board there continued to be a significant reduction in the ESL student population. The changes in the pattern of how students were supporting themselves, however, did not reach significance. Instead, there was a significant difference in the how the students responded to the question of why they were in school. In the post-grant year, there was a drop in the proportion of students who said they wanted to get a better job, and a corresponding increase in the proportion who said they were in school for self-improvement or to go to college or university. These results can be seen in Table 5.

The reduction in the ESL population is the result of the trend to transfer ESL courses from the credit stream to the less-expensive non-credit program. In London, for example, there was an 8.1% drop in the number of ESL students between 1996 and 1997, and this figure could be expected to rise because there was an 88% drop in the number of ESL credit courses offered in the adult school between February 1994 and February 1997. A similar pattern can be seen in the City of York where the 20% cut to the adult education budget in 1996-97 was dealt with by reducing the day-school funded ESL classes.

There is no obvious explanation of why the pattern of how students were supporting themselves changed in the Boards outside of Toronto, or why there was a change in the reason why students were attending school in the City of York Board. One possible explanation is that the economic climate in Ontario is changing and students with the most job-readiness skills were leaving to take employment. This reasoning would be consistent with the pattern that was seen in the Boards outside Toronto where there was a drop in the proportion of students on employment insurance. Students who had worked recently enough to qualify for employment insurance would also be the ones to have skills to gain new employment. If this were the case, it means that the students remaining in the secondary programs are those with the most severe handicaps and disadvantages.

Decrease in Enrolment and narrowing of opportunities

The evidence above supports the view that there has been a narrowing of educational opportunities for adults in the Boards of Brant County, London, Grey County, and Niagara South. This explains the sharp decline in the number of adults registered in those Boards in the year following the implementation of the new grant system. In the 1996-97 school year (with the comparable figures for the 1995-96 year in brackets) the registration of adults reported by the Target Boards was: Brant County -0 (120), Grey County - 67 (162), City of London -1981 (2440), and Niagara South - 683 (1203). The extent of this province-wide pattern of dropping enrolment was documented in a study commissioned by the Continuing Education School Administrators (CESBA) which notes that "in 1996, adult enrolments in regular day school and adult day school declined by 60% and 44% respectively." The decrease in regular day school and adults-only school enrolments was partially offset by a 45% increase in Continuing Education day school enrolment resulting in an overall 20% decrease in adult daytime enrolments." (p4)

This research also demonstrates that the group of people who are most likely to register in secondary school programs are those people who are the most disadvantaged in the society and those most vulnerable to discrimination. Because these people are already economically disadvantaged, they cannot access job training in the private market and are dependent on the publicly-funded public education system. With the development of the new model of adult education which resulted from the changes in the adult grant system and in the Education Act, the most vulnerable groups in the society no longer have equitable access to secondary educational opportunities.

APPENDIX A:

ADULT STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE. RESPONDING TO THIS SURVEY IS VOLUNTARY. PLEASE PUT A CHECK BESIDE THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE. PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME OR ANY OTHER IDENTIFYING MARKS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. As of December 31, 1996 will you be 21 years or older? Yes No

2. Are you: Male Female

3. What type of school are you in now? (Ask your teacher if you are not sure.)

Check the one in which you spend the most time.

"Regular" day school secondary program
"Adult" day school secondary program
continuing education credit day school program
continuing education non-credit program

4. Why are you in school? Pick the one that is most important to you.

To get a better job
Self-improvement
To go to college or university
Other

5. Has your experience in school this year helped you toward that plan?

Yes No

6. As of today, what is your major source of income? Check one.

Job
Government assistance
My family
Savings
Unemployment insurance
Other

7. In the last three years, have you taken an English as a Second Language course?

Yes No

SECTION 2: HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

There are specific groups who are protected by Human Rights legislation. We want to know how many students belong to one of those groups.

8. Do you consider yourself to have: (You may check more than one)

A physical disability? Yes No

A learning disability? Yes No

Other disability? Yes No

9. Do you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority?

Yes No

SECTION 3: SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

10. When you were in school as a child or teenager did you have a disability or learning problem that kept you from being successful in school?

Yes No

11. Since you returned to school as an adult, have you asked for the help of a special education teacher?

Yes No

12. Since you returned to school as an adult, have you been given an IPRC (Identification Placement and Review Committee) meeting? (You will know if you have)

Yes No

SECTION 4: YOUR PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

Complete only if you plan to continue taking secondary school courses in September.

13. Do you know that beginning September 1996 boards of education will receive much less provincial funding for adult students than for adolescent students?

Yes No

14. Have you been told that in September 1996 you must take a different type of program than you are taking now because of the changes to funding of adult education?

Yes No

15. Have you been told of any course which you will not be able to take at your current school in September 1996 because of the change in funding?

Yes No

16. If "yes" to #15, have you been told that you can take that course at a different school? (If you answered "no" to #15, leave this question blank.)

Yes No

COMMENTS

We would very much like to read your comments about the issues raised in this survey. Please write them below.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE AND GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR STUDIES.

APPENDIX B

	Question	Choice	# Responses	% Responses
2.	Are you?	Male: Female:	2551 4459	38 84
3	What type of school are you in now?	Regular day school: Adult day school: Con ed credit day school: Con ed non-credit day school:	1267 5148 205 76	19 77 3 1
4	Why are you in school?	To get a better job: Self improvement: To go to college/university: Other:	2364 1423 2513 354	36 21 38 5
5	Has your experience in school this year helped you toward that plan?	Yes: No:	6586 239	98 4
6	As of today, what is your <u>major</u> source of income:	Job: Government assistance: My family: Savings: Unemployment Insurance: Other:	1214 2788 1446 302 583 600	18 40 21 4 8 9
7	In the last three years, have you taken an English as a Second Language course?	Yes: No	2962 3839	44 56
8	Do you consider yourself to have:	A physical disability? A learning disability? Other disability?	581 642 318	24 27 18

9	Do you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority?	Yes: No:	2293 4134	36 64
10	When you were in school as a child or teenager did you have a disability or learning problem that kept you from being successful in school?	Yes: No:	1043 4730	18 82
11	Since you returned to school as an adult, have you asked for the help of a special education teacher?	Yes: No:	677 5027	12 88
12	Since you returned to school as an adult have you been given an IPRC (Identification Placement and Review Committee) meeting?	Yes: No:	314 5182	6 94
13	Do you know that beginning September 1996 boards of education will receive much less provincial funding for adult students than for adolescent students?	Yes: No:	4566 737	86 14
14	Have you been told that in September 1996 you must take a different type of program than you are taking now because of the changes to funding of adult education?	Yes: No:	2404 2627	49 51
15	Have you been told of any course which you will not be able to take at your current school in September 1996 because of the change in funding?	Yes: No:	1828 3154	37 83
16	If "yes" to #15, have you been told that you can take that course at a different school?	Yes: No:	728 1310	38 84

APPENDIX C:

ADULT STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE. RESPONDING TO THIS SURVEY IS VOLUNTARY. PLEASE PUT A CHECK BESIDE THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE. PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME OR ANY OTHER IDENTIFYING MARKS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. As of today, are you 21 years or older?
Yes No
2. Are you:
Male Female
3. Why are you in school? Pick the one that is most important to you.
To get a better job
Self-improvement
To go to college or university
Other
4. Has your experience in school this year helped you toward that plan?
Yes No
5. As of today, what is your major source of income? Check one.
Job
Government assistance
My family
Savings
Unemployment insurance
Other
6. In the last three years, have you taken an English as a Second Language course?
Yes No

SECTION 2: HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

There are specific groups who are protected by Human Rights legislation. We want to know how many students belong to one of those groups.

7. Do you consider yourself to have: (You may check more than one)
A physical disability? Yes No
A learning disability? Yes No
Other disability? Yes No
8. Do you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority?
Yes No

SECTION 3: SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

9. When you were in school as a child or teenager did you have a disability or learning problem that kept you from being successful in school?

Yes No

10. Since you returned to school as an adult, have you asked for the help of a special education teacher?

Yes No

11. Since you returned to school as an adult, have you been given an IPRC (Identification Placement and Review Committee) meeting? (You will know if you have)

Yes No

SECTION 4: YOUR PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

Complete only if you plan to continue taking secondary school courses in September.

12. Do you know that boards of education receive much less provincial funding for adult students than for adolescent students?

Yes No

13. Are there any courses normally available in adolescent schools which you would like to take but which you cannot take because you are an adult?

Yes No

If the answer is "Yes", tell us which course(s) you would like, but which you cannot take because you are an adult.

14. Do you know that there are some situations in which adult students are allowed to take courses in adolescent schools?

Yes No

15. Are you aware of learning opportunities for yourself other than the school in which you are presently enrolled?

Yes No

If the answer is "Yes" where else could you go to get the education you need right now?

COMMENTS

We would very much like to read your comments about the issues raised in this survey. Please write them below.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE AND GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR STUDIES.